



# Lilly pilly beetle (*Paropsides calypso*)

Lilly pilly beetles (*Paropsides calypso*) were first discovered in Helensville, Auckland, in early 2023. They are now believed to be well-established in the area. This fact sheet tells you about the pest beetle and what to do if you think you have found it.

## About the beetle

The lilly pilly beetle is native to subtropical rainforests in northern New South Wales, Australia, and is found in coastal regions of Queensland, Victoria and South Australia.

Lilly pilly adult beetles and larvae feed on leaves of *Syzygium*, a genus of flowering trees and shrubs in the myrtle family (*Myrtaceae*), including popular hedging plants commonly known as lilly pilly. The beetles can completely strip the foliage of a plant.

## What to look for

The adult beetle is shiny, bright green and 5mm to 9mm long. Larvae range from 1mm to 10mm, are pale green and can have a reddish tinge.

On plants, look for damage on new growth, especially leaf notching (crescent shaped “bites” out of leaves).



Larvae of the lilly pilly beetle. Photo: Natalia Kravchenko.



Lilly pilly adult beetle. Photo: Martin Lagerwey, iNaturalist.



Leaf notching caused by feeding lilly pilly beetle larvae (left) and adult beetle (right).  
Photos: Ministry for Primary Industries - Plant Health and Environment Laboratory.



Leaves damaged by the lilly pilly beetle.  
Photo: Catherine Stewart.



## Where to look

There are a number of introduced species of *Syzygium* in New Zealand grown as ornamentals and hedges that lilly pilly beetle feed on. These plants are commonly called lilly pilly, monkey apple, scrub cherry and brush cherry. The flowers, leaves and fruit of these plants are similar. Leaves are arranged in opposing pairs on branches, and the new leaves are reddish in colour.

Look for leaves with signs of feeding damage. The beetles and larvae will be on the underside of the leaves.

## What should I do if I find the beetle?

If you think you have found lilly pilly beetles in your garden, visit your garden centre for advice on how to treat pest insects.

Please report any findings at  
**[www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org)**.



Lilly pilly/scrub cherry/brush cherry (*Syzygium australe*).  
Photo: Brett Farmer.



Monkey apple (*Syzygium smithii*). Photo: Trevor James, Weedbusters.



Lilly pilly leaves. Photo: Trevor James, Weedbusters.



Magenta lilly pilly/magenta cherry/brush cherry (*Syzygium paniculatum*). Photo: David Glenn, Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research.